PUTTING SAFETY FIRST

HOW TRACIE ARLINGTON HELPED EMILY BAKER GAIN THE CONFIDENCE AND SKILLS TO HELP KEEP HERSELF AND HER DAUGHTERS SAFE, BY EMPOWERING HER WITH ESSENTIAL SELF DEFENSE KNOWLEDGE AND MOVES.

When Emily Baker first met Tracie Arlington, it was in unfortunate circumstances.

"There had been two attempted child abductions in my town in three months, she explains. "Everyone was in shock and feeling pretty scared, so a local therapist who knew Tracie organized one of her in-person *Play It Safe For Kids* classes in our local park."

There was so much demand that Tracie had to add extra classes.

"I signed my girls up straight away," says Emily, a mom of two daughters, aged 8 and 10. "We live in a great neighborhood, which often feels like a safe bubble, but the attempted abductions outside neighbors' own homes hit home that danger can be just around the corner - anywhere.

"I'm sure I often 'over-worry' about my daughters but the fact is that I'm not with them 100% of the time," says Emily.

And even though she lives in a cul-de-sac, which offers some safety, Emily says she's always conscious of delivery trucks driven by strangers going in and out all day long.

"It does make me nervous when they're out playing but it's so hard to navigate explaining potential 'stranger danger' to young children without giving them nightmares,. And honestly, I've never felt I've got that 'mom-job' right."

Meeting Tracie and seeing her work in action changed everything, says Emily.

CASE STUDY

THE FACTS

- **A reported 10% of kids and teens abducted are taken by strangers.**
- **An estimated 1 in 5 girls are victims of sexual assault in college.**
- **27.8% of students report being bullied at school.**

The **PlayItSafeDefense** founder is a nationally-certified self-defense expert and a black belt in taekwondo. She teaches in-person classes all around San Diego and features online programs on her website.

So renowned is Tracie's teaching and expertise, she's been featured twice on the 'Dr Phil' show and on his podcast, *'Phil In The Blanks'*.

The class took place in a local park with up to 20 other children. "I really didn't know what to expect - maybe some karate moves..." says Emily.

"I just knew I needed my daughters to be aware of potential dangers from someone else - the right person - and to know how to protect themselves when at all possible."

Emily said the class was extremely interactive, with Tracie giving examples of a dangerous situation and then showing the children how they should respond both verbally, and if necessary, physically. Then the children got to practice.

"Tracie is fun and friendly but firm with the kids. She doesn't sugarcoat the dangers and gives real-life stories for warning, but she does it in an expert way that somehow gets kids to listen and act."

Tracie's assistants help her roleplay with the children by demonstrating gently but realistically very specific ways predators behave. "Watching the kids become empowered was amazing," says Emily. "You could see on their faces that they were taking it all in rather than feeling scared.

“Tracie got the shyest-looking kids shouting and fighting back because she and her team get up close. They even pull them by the feet while instructing them how to get out of the hold - and the children just do it!”

Being allowed to be physical in the class rather than just listen seemed to help the children get past their nerves, says Emily. And Tracie has mannequins that kids can punch and claw, just like she teaches them to.

The class also covered bullying at school, including advice on how to verbally deal with being excluded, which Emily found essential advice for her girls. “I simply wouldn't be able to explain it as well as Tracie does. I got so many valuable ideas from her.

“She’s so knowledgeable and passionate about teaching self-defense - and I wish had half her energy!" laughs Emily. "Her infectious laugh and magnetic personality totally help as she skillfully segways from pointing out the dangers to demonstrating how children can protect themselves."

When Emily went up to thank Tracie at the end, she said they clicked straight away. "I came away absolutely determined to find a way I could further spread her essential knowledge to help other women keep themselves and their children safe."

Emily combed Tracie’s website and realized that she taught self defense classes for all ages. Emily's niece and her two best friends were about to go to college for the first time two months later. And when Emily learned from Tracie's website that 1 in 5 girls will be sexually assaulted during their college experience, she contacted all the moms, who immediately signed their girls up for Tracie's *Self Defense for Women and Teens class.*

"My daughters are still young," says Emily. "But I've read enough awful stories of campus assault, including the horrifying part of it being covered up by the colleges, to know that girls in particular need warning and empowering."

Emily and the other moms went along to watch the class. It was August, a time when many parents are sending their daughters off to college for the first time so the class was full.

"I'm from London so I grew up pretty street wise but even for me, what Tracie taught was eye opening," explains Emily. "You simply have to learn this stuff from an expert – no question.

"It was fantastic to see these young women arm themselves with the awareness, knowledge and practical moves to keep themselves safe. Many of the girls were still at high school and dealing with so much in their teen years, so it was essential grounding for them.

"Again, I was just amazed as it's not only what Tracie teaches, but *how* she teaches it. It's this constant feeling of, 'Oh my goodness, I need this! Everybody needs this!'"

"If you come to class feeling shy, you won't leave that way. Tracie doesn't mess about. She gets you to practice right then and there - to get down on the floor and literally kick your way out of an attack."

" You'll learn what weapons predators use, the reasons they pick certain women and teens to attack, and everyday items we should all carry to protect ourselves. Her class covered both prevention and how to defend yourself.

"Because of Tracie, myself, my daughters, and my teen niece and her friends are more aware, empowered and safer. My girls are still young but now I feel more knowledgeable and equipped to help teach them about safety moving forward."

But that's just part of it, says Emily. "I'm so grateful to have developed a friendship with Tracie and been able to help spread about women and childrens' safety.

"Tracie's passion for her work is so obvious and her mission to help keep us safe is truly inspiring. Plus she looks like she has so much fun doing it, and that totally rubs off on the kids in her classes and helps build their confidence.

"I strongly encourage any woman or mom to look into Tracie's classes - either in-person or online if you aren't in San Diego - to learn both the facts and how to protect yourself and your children."

And it's never too early. "I'm not sending my daughters off to college yet," says Emily. "But I've empowered myself, and in turn my girls, by becoming aware of how they can keep themselves safe in advance.

"Tracie's work has honestly had an impact on me like no one else's, especially now I'm a mother. She laughs and says she wishes she could clone me and my enthusiasm about her work. But her knowledge in keeping us all safe is so important and inspiring that I will rave about her until the cows come home, as we say in my native England!"

To learn more about Tracie Arlington and how her courses can help protect you and your family, visit playitsafedefense.com